

*SCOPTES* HÜBNER [1819] v. *CAPYS* HEWITSON 1864 (LEPIDOPTERA, LYCAENIDAE), A CASE OF A FORGOTTEN NAME. Z.N.(S.) 1748

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Hübner [1819], in his well known *Verzeichnis bekannter Schmetterlinge* introduced the generic name *Scoptes* (: 111) for a heterogeneous group of three species which he called *Scoptes alpheus* Cram. 182. E.F.; *S. protumnus* Linn. Syst. Pap. 258; and *S. crotopus* Cram. 390. G.H. In the same work Hübner also placed *protumnus* (under its synonym *petalus* Cram. 243. C.D.) in his new genus *Thestor* (l.c. : 73) and *crotopus* in his new genus *Euselasia* (l.c. : 24).

2. In 1864 Hewitson (*Ill. Diurn. Lep.* : 58) introduced the generic name *Capys* and included in it one species only, namely *Papilio alpheus* Cramer, which automatically became its type-species by monotypy.

3. Five years later Butler (1869, *Cat. Diurn. Lep. Fabricius Brit. Mus.* : 176) in a footnote to *Scoptes* Hübner, adds "*Capys* of Hewitson". Butler in this work refers only one species, namely *alpheus* Cramer, to *Scoptes*, but makes no statement at all as to whether or not he regarded *alpheus* as the type-species of *Scoptes*. His action cannot be construed as fixing *alpheus* as the type-species of *Scoptes*.

4. Scudder in 1875 (*Proc. Amer. Acad. Arts Sci. Boston* 10 : 267) in his *Sketch of the Generic Names of the Butterflies*, recited these facts, but did not select a type-species for *Scoptes*, considering, for reasons that no longer hold good, that this was unnecessary.

5. I have been unable to discover any subsequent action by any author that could possibly be accepted as fixing the type-species of *Scoptes*. Indeed I have only traced two other quotations of the name in the whole of the subsequent literature. The first is by Kirby (1871, *Syn. Cat. Diurn. Lep.* : 337) who quotes it as a synonym of *Axiocerses* Hübner ([1819], l.c. : 72); the second by Aurivillius (1898, *Rhop. Aeth.* : 335, 337) who treats it as a partial synonym of both *Capys* Hewitson and *Leptomyrina* Butler 1898, to both of which it is considerably senior.

6. The question at issue therefore is to decide which of the three nominal species originally included in *Scoptes* by Hübner should be selected as its type-species, bearing in mind the desirability of causing the least possible disturbance to other generic names involved.

If we select *crotopus*, then *Scoptes* becomes a subjective synonym of *Euselasia*, one of the better known genera of Riodinidae, and a first reviser choice becomes necessary as between these two names, since according to Hemming (1937, *Hübner* 2 : 198, 253) both these Hübnerian names were published "early in 1819"; and in all probability a certain amount of taxonomic research would also be necessary.

If we select *protumnus*, then *Scoptes* becomes an objective synonym of *Thestor*, which has *protumnus* as its type-species and is a very well-known

Lycaenid generic name, already the subject of considerable misuse. Here again, and for precisely the same reason, a first reviser choice would be necessary.

If *alpheus* is selected, then *Scoptes* becomes an objective senior synonym of *Capys* Hewitson, which also has *alpheus* as its type-species and is the current name, and has been for 100 years, for a well known genus of South African Lycaenidae.

7. Whichever of these courses is adopted there will be a risk of disturbance of long accepted practice (first and second choices), or an actual disturbance (third choice). As the consequences of adopting the third choice can be easily avoided by the Commission acting either under its plenary powers, or under Article 23(b) if still in force, whereas this does not apply in the other two cases, I here and now select *Papilio alpheus* Cramer [1777], *Uitl. Kapellen* 2 (16) : 131, pl. 183, figs. E.F. to be the type-species of *Scoptes* Hübner [1819] *Verz. bekannt. Schmett.* : 111, and at the same time invite the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to use its plenary powers to suppress this name for purposes of Priority, but not Homonymy and to place it on the Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names.